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NIRF RANKS IISc BENGALURU AS TOP UNIVERSITY IN INDIA

The Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, retained the top position in the 'University' category in the annual NIRF

INSTITUTES RANKED ON FIVE PARAMETERS

The National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) ranks institutes based on five parameters, viz. Teaching, Learning & Resources, Research and Professional Practice, Graduation Outcomes, Outreach and Inclusivity, and Peer Perception. In the 'Overall' category, IISc retained the second position, securing 84.18%, compared with 82.28% last year | P5,8

3 OTHER INSTITUTES EARN LAURELS

- The NLSIU, Bengaluru, held the top spot in the 'Law' category
- Indian Institute of Management-Bengaluru dropped to second spot in the 'Management' category
- Manipal College of Dental Sciences, Udupi, was in second place in a new category for dental colleges, scoring 78.17%

3,771
HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS TOOK PART IN THE RANKING PROCESS

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Reservation not a fundamental right, says SC

Rejects pleas to implement OBC quota in Tamil Nadu's share of all India medical seats

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Thursday said reservation is not a fundamental right as it refused to admit a batch of petitions seeking the implementation of 50% reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) for state-surrendered seats in the all-India quota for undergraduate and post-graduate medical courses in Tamil Nadu.

"We appreciate the concern of all the political parties for the welfare of backward classes. But reservation is not a fundamental right," a three-judge bench led by Justice L Nageswara Rao told the lawyers appearing for various parties including the AIADMK, DMK, Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, CPI and CPI(M).

All withdrew their petitions with a liberty to approach the Madras High Court.

In a ruling in February, the SC had held there is no fundamental right to claim reservation in public jobs and no court can order a state to provide for reservation to SC/STs.

The petitions were filed by the CPI, DMK and some of its leaders asking for 50% OBC reservation in seats surrendered by Tamil Nadu in the all India quota for undergraduate, post-graduate medical and dental courses in 2020-21. They said that in Tamil Nadu, there is 69% reservation for OBCs, SCs and STs and within this, OBC reservations are about 50%.

The petitions said that 50% of OBC candidates must get admissions in the medical colleges out of seats surrendered under the all India quota, except for Central Government institutions.

"Denial of admissions to OBC candidates is a violation of their fundamental right," stated the pleas, asking for a stay on the counselling under NEET till the reservation is given.

The bench observed verbally that no case was made out for the petitioners to approach the top court directly under Article 32 — a remedy available under the Indian Constitution if there is violation of a fundamental right.

"Whose fundamental rights are being violated? Article 32 is available only for violation of fundamental rights. We assume you are all interested in fundamental rights of the citizens of Tamil Nadu. But right to reservation is not a fundamental right," observed the bench.

YOUR NEWSPAPER IS TOTALLY SAFE

BSY Cabinet okays more land reforms

ANUSHA RAVI @Bengaluru

BARELY months after it made amendments to the Land Reforms Act to allow industries to buy agricultural land, the Karnataka Cabinet on Thursday gave in-principle approval for further amendments, doubling the ceiling on land holdings and removing restrictions on non-agriculturists purchasing agriculture lands.

While the cabinet approved the policy decision, it will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly as a Bill for discussion before it becomes an Act. Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister J C Madhuswamy and Revenue Minister R Ashoka announced the decision to repeal Sections 79-A (Prohibition on acquisition of land by certain persons), 79-B (Prohibition of holding agricultural land by certain persons), 79-C (Penalty for failure to furnish declaration) and Section 80 (Bar on transfers to non-agriculturists). The cabinet has also approved doubling the ceiling on land holdings from 10 units per family of five to 20 units, under Section 63. The upper limit of holdings, however, will not exceed 108 acres per family.

"In the last 45 years, ever since the Act came into force, some 88,171 cases of contention under Section 79 A, B, C and Section 80 have been filed, but the government has not been able to recover even 1 per cent of the land. But the same restrictions have been abused to harass farmers and landowners. We are amending the law so that the harassment ends and the process of land purchase is smoother, even for non-agriculturists," Ashoka said. He pointed out that simpler land reform Acts in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu have been attracting investors and Karnataka is looking to generate more revenue by ensuring ease of business.

The Opposition, which has been stonewalling the move to dilute the Land Reform Acts, has raised a red flag, calling it a retrograde move. P5

DARSHAN WITH A DISTANCE

Devotees of Lord Venkateswara entering the famous Tirupati temple in Andhra Pradesh's Chittoor district, which reopened its doors to the public on Thursday after remaining closed for about 80 days due to the pandemic, following strict precautionary measures such as wearing masks and maintaining social distance | PTI

KARNATAKA COVID-19 BATTLE

6,245 TOTAL CASES AS ON THURSDAY

204 Test Positive on Thursday

72 Total Deaths

2,976 Total Recoveries so far

FROM ACROSS THE STATE

- Bengaluru Urban reports two fatalities, while one patient dies in Raichur district
- BMTC bus conductor in Bengaluru tests positive, [illegible]
- Over 40 cases have already emerged from the JSW plant site in Ballari district, which has people in Toranagallu and Hosapete areas in a panic

P4

ICMR: Less than 1 pc of population infected, no community spread

SUMI SUKANYA DUTTA
@New Delhi

REITERATING that India has not reached the community transmission stage of Covid-19 spread yet, the Centre on Thursday said that the first serosurvey revealed just 0.73% of the population in non-hotspot districts had been infected.

"The prevalence has been found to be less than 1% in small districts. In urban and containment areas, it may be slightly higher. But, India is definitely not in community transmission. I would like to emphasise it," Indian Council of Medical Research Director-General Dr Balram Bhargava said, without sharing the data for containment zones.

The serosurvey's findings were based on samples from 83 districts across 21 states, categorised on the basis of zero, low, medium and high case loads. Over 26,000 randomly selected blood serum samples were tested using ELISA antibody testing kits, developed by the National Institute of Virology, Pune, Bhargava added.

"That means, a large chunk of the population in the country is still very susceptible to the infection," he said, adding that the nationwide lockdown and containment measures prevented a rapid rise in infections.

The ICMR has now estimated that the fatality rate due to the infection is very low at 0.08%. Experts, meanwhile, estimated the present infection in the country at two crore against the official figure of 2.86 lakh. P7

EXPRESS READ

Apex court asks DoT to reconsider ₹4 lakh cr claim on PSUs

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday asked the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) to reconsider within three days its demand seeking ₹4 lakh crore in past dues from non-telecom PSUs such as GAIL, saying raising such a demand using its verdict on dues of telecom companies was "totally impermissible". The apex court also asked telecom companies to file affidavit explaining the time needed by them to clear the remaining dues that arose from the court verdict of including non-telecom revenues for calculating dues to the government. P10

Nepal to 'get back' land through talks

Kathmandu: Nepal Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli has said that his government will seek a solution to the Kalapani issue through diplomatic efforts and dialogue on the basis of historical facts and documents. He claimed that India built a Kali temple, created "an artificial Kali river" and "encroached the Nepalese territory through deploying the Army" at Kalapani. Oli's claim comes in midst of a boundary row between the two countries, with India asking Nepal not to resort to any "artificial enlargement" of territorial claims. P8

Covid crisis an opportunity: Modi

Kolkata: Insisting that the Covid-19 crisis should be turned into an opportunity to create an 'Aatma Nirbhar Bharat', Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said this is the time to make bold decisions and investments. Addressing the 95th annual plenary session of the Indian Chamber of Commerce in Kolkata through video conference, he said that steps have to be taken to ensure that imported products are manufactured in the country and exported. In the last 5-6 years, India's goal of self- reliance has been paramount, he added.

50k GP staff haven't got pay for 8 months

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @Bengaluru

THOUSANDS of employees in over 6,000 Gram Panchayats in Karnataka, who were working even during the Coronavirus outbreak helping Health and Revenue Department officials, have not been paid salaries for the last eight months.

There are 6,081 Gram Panchayats in the state, where at least 50,000 people are employed in various positions like bill collectors, watermen, data operators and attenders. Most of them were working even through the lockdown, reaching out to people in distress, creating awareness in villages, supplying health kits and taking up other tasks.

A Panchayat Development Officer in one of the GPs in Tumakuru district said that PDOs are getting their salaries, but not the other staff. "We are yet to get funds from the government. We have not paid them since December", he pointed out.

Earlier, the staffers were paid by Panchayats through locally generated funds. Since there were shortfalls, the State Government intervened, and in March 2018, it decided to pay the staff directly.

In a letter to all Chief Executives of taluk and gram panchayats, a copy of which is available with *TNIE*, the Under-Secretary (Gram Panchayat) has stated that it has come to the notice of the government that gram panchayat employees have not been paid for the last eight months. The letter also mentions that Rs 520 crore has been allocated towards salaries of the GP employees, which will be paid in four instalments. He has sought a report from the officers with details of all those employees who have not received their salaries.

> We are yet to get funds from the government. We have not paid them since December
>
> A Panchayat Development Officer at a GP in Tumakuru district

A senior officer in the Panchayat Raj Department said the GP staff are appointed by the local bodies. "The GPs should pay them from their own sources of revenue. The government can support only to some extent and grants have been released every quarter. Panchayats should streamline their staff and adopt responsible systems to manage their finances. They cannot go on adding staff and expect the government to pay all salaries. They need to match their resources with their staff strength. This is an ongoing process and we are helping gram panchayats streamline their staff and resources," the officer said.

Another senior officer said that due to the Covid-19 outbreak, there was delay in releasing government grants to the panchayats and hence, the staff were not paid.

SEDITION CASE

Amulya gets bail after four months

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

A city magistrate court on Thursday granted bail to Amulya Leona in a sedition case against her for raising pro-Pakistan slogans.

Amulya (19) was arrested by the Upparpet police for allegedly shouting 'Pakistan Zindabad' slogans at an anti-CAA protest held at Freedom Park in February in which Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi had taken part.

While the 60th Additional City Civil and Sessions Court judge Vidyadhar Shirahatti had dismissed her bail petition on Wednesday, the 5th Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (ACMM) court granted her bail as the police had not submitted the chargesheet to the court within the stipulated 90 days.

Police sources said that Amulya, who is lodged at Bengaluru Central Prison in Parappana Agrahara, was not released as the bail formalities were not yet completed. "The process may be completed on Friday and she may be released by evening," a police officer said.

Amulya, a journalism student from Chikkamagaluru, has been lodged in jail for over four months. Her counsel Prasanna R had moved the bail plea on June 2 as the police had not submitted the chargesheet and had argued that she was eligible for default bail. Police submitted the chargesheet on June 3.

MISTAKEN IDENTITIES

For name's sake, don't confuse officials at quarantine centres!

Barricades are a common sight in Kalaburagi, a district which has seen a spate of Covid-19 positive cases | EXPRESS

RAMKRISHNA BADSESHI
@Kalaburagi

YOU may not believe, but Lakhan can become Lakshman or ask for Somu, and Somlu may answer. What's in a name, you may say. For answer, you should speak to the officials on quarantine duty entrusted with the task of monitoring people under home quarantine, especially those from the Banjara tribe. It looks like the novel coronavirus is bringing with it some novel problems too.

Chasing Lakhan and instead getting Lakshman – this is turning into a headache for the officials monitoring Maharashtra returnees, most of them from the Banjara community residing in different thandas. The returnees are under home quarantine after completing the period of institutional quarantine.

An official on condition of anonymity told *TNIE*, "Some persons from the same family who were in institutional quarantine were discharged from the centre after seven days of mandatory quarantine. Before discharging them, samples of their swabs were collected and sent to test. They were discharged before the results were out."

So far, so good. Trouble arose when the officials went looking for a person who tested positive. A person named Lakhan of one particular family had tested positive. When the officials went to his house and shouted his name, a man later identified as Lakshman came out instead of Lakhan. As a precaution, the officials checked his cell number in their records and Lakshman said it was his. However, the officials were taken aback after conducting a test again at the hospital. Lakshman tested negative. They had taken along with them the wrong person. P5